PRESS RELEASE

JEMB LAUNCHES ‘WITNESS PROGRAM’ ON AFGHAN TV

September 3, 2005

The Joint Electoral Management Body Secretariat will launch a daily television election program this weekend on RTA state-run television. The ‘Witness Program’ will be broadcast nightly after the 7.00 pm Dari news and 8.00 pm Pashto news, starting Saturday, September 3.

The Witness Program is produced by JEMBS in cooperation with Radio Television Afghanistan (RTA) and the United Nations Assistance Mission for Afghanistan (UNAMA).

The program will provide the Afghan public with a visual commentary on the electoral process, reflecting different aspects of the election operation in all 34 provinces, including the arrival of ballot papers from overseas, their distribution to polling centres, training of election workers, civic education and special election community mobilization events.

The highlight of the Witness Program will be coverage of Election Day.

Six teams will be present across the country and provide same-day coverage of Afghans going to the polls on this historic day. The teams will also be present in counting centres across the country in the days after the vote to provide the public a view into the counting process and the procedures in place to ensure a transparent process.

The Witness Program will be a mirror of the elections process. Content will not reflect election campaigning, candidates’ views or political issues.

Starting September 3, RTA will broadcast episodes of the Witness Program every day after the 7.00 pm Dari news and 8.00 pm Pashto news. The program will feature civic education messages as well as interviews with different in-studio guests from the JEMB, its secretariat and other organizations.

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